2021-2022 Voices Academies Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan (ESSER III)

September 2021 (DRAFT)
Disclaimer

Voices plans are tentative and can be influenced by a number of factors including:

• Changing health and safety guidelines
• Updated guidance from state officials
• Resource availability and feasibility of safely reopening schools

When state or local guidance conflicts, the most stringent guidance shall apply.
School Reentry Plan

The 21-22 Voices Academies School Reentry plan replaces the Voices Academies School Reopening Plan (Revised October 2020).

Voices has implemented the following policies:

- COVID-19 Face Covering Policy
- Vaccination paid time off
- COVID Addendum to the School Culture Playbook
- Telecommuting Safety Recommendations
- COVID-19 Interim Teleworking Policy and Agreement
- COVID-19 Employee Expense Reimbursement Policy
- COVID-19 Employee Related Employment Leave Policy
Introduction and Overview

We have received official guidance for opening schools in the fall from the State of California and the local health departments of each our Voices communities (Santa Clara County, Contra Costa County and San Joaquin County).

There is no perfect approach that will be optimal for everyone, and ultimately we have taken the practical realities of operating a school and the needs of our students, families and staff into consideration. We will continue to be responsive and update our plan as we receive new information or guidance or as the community COVID-19 conditions evolve.

This plan will provide an overview of the following:

• Instructional Model
• General Measures: On campus and classroom procedures
• Healthy Hygiene Practices
• Attendance and Health Screenings
• Student Social-Emotional Well Being
• Cleaning, Disinfection, and Ventilation
• Plan for when a staff member, student or visitor becomes sick
Assumption #1: COVID-19 Transmission

Key scientific findings have important implications for how we think about infection risk and play an important role in guiding our recommendations for preventing transmission in school. Specifically, these findings suggest:

• that COVID-19 transmission in schools is likely to be less widespread than influenza transmission,
• that transmission risks among younger children appear to be lower than older children.
Assumption #2: Schools should be prepared for partial or full school closures

As schools prepare to resume in-person instruction, schools should also ensure plans are in place for alternate instruction for students who may need to isolate or quarantine, as well as students who are medically fragile. Schools should also be prepared for the possibility of partial or full school closure, either short-term or for a longer period.
Vaccinations

COVID-19 vaccination among all eligible students as well as teachers, staff, and household members is the most critical strategy to help schools safely resume full operations.

Vaccination is the leading public health prevention strategy to end the COVID-19 pandemic. People who are fully vaccinated against COVID-19 are at low risk of symptomatic or severe infection.

- Visit vaccines.gov to find out where teachers, staff, students, and their families can get vaccinated against COVID-19 in the community and promote COVID-19 vaccination locations near schools.
Staff COVID-19 Testing

The California Department of Public Health issued an order that requires all school staff to either show proof of full vaccination for COVID-19 or be tested at least once per week.

The order requires all public schools to verify vaccination for COVID-19 and have a system for tracking vaccinated staff.

Any unvaccinated or incompletely vaccinated staff will be tested at least once weekly.
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Testing, Reporting and Response to Suspected or Confirmed Cases

Health officials have stated that COVID-19 will be present in our communities for the foreseeable future until the effective vaccines are widely used. We should expect positive cases of COVID-19 just like there will be cases of influenza this flu season.

Following established preventive measures, identification and communication can help maintain a healthy organization and community.
• Voices has a COVID-19 Liaison who is responsible for responding to COVID-19 concerns.

• Unvaccinated staff are required to have a weekly COVID-19 test.

• COVID-19 test will be available for vaccinated staff who wish to be tested.
Voices will follow the Response to Suspected or Confirmed Cases and Close Contacts Protocol*

County Health Departments have procedures in place for investigating communicable disease cases. Health Departments and Voices COVID Liaison will conduct contact tracing using classroom rosters and information obtained from school personnel through interviews and in coordination with school officials.
- Students and staff must get tested after they develop one or more COVID-19 symptoms or if one of their household members or non-household close contacts tested positive for COVID-19, per CDC guidance.
- Parents/guardians and staff must notify school administration immediately if the student or staff tested positive for COVID-19 or if one of their household members or non-household close contacts tested positive for COVID-19.
Communication will vary depending on the specific circumstances of a case in a school community. At a minimum, the affected cohort will be notified. Voices will work with the county public health department to determine next steps and communication.
Documentation of negative test results must be provided to school administration for symptomatic individuals.

In lieu of a negative test result, symptomatic students and staff may return to work/school with a medical note by a physician that provides alternative explanation for symptoms and reason for not ordering COVID-19 testing.
Instructional Model

Voices' highest priority is staff and student safety. We are prepared to implement in-person instruction that assures safety and student learning.

Additionally, Voices is also prepared to pivot back and forth between models as the COVID-19 situation evolves and the CDE allows.

Voices has developed instructional models that facilitate all COVID-19 scenarios:

- Phase I - Distance Learning
- Phase II - Bridge Slow Ramp Up
- Phase III - Hybrid
- Phase IV - In Person learning
Independent Studies (IS) will be available for the following students:

• Students who are medically fragile and would be put at risk by in-person instruction (*long term IS*)

• Students who are isolating or quarantining because of exposure to COVID-19 (*short term IS*)

• IDEA-eligible students with disabilities "shall not participate in independent study, unless the pupil’s individualized education program ... specifically provides for that participation." (Ed. Code §51745(c).)

We request that families seeking IS due to medical fragility provide a physician’s note supporting such request.
Independent Studies is NOT distance learning. Students will receive *some* synchronous learning time and be assigned independent assignments to complete.

Parents must request a conference with school personnel to determine appropriateness of assigning Independent Studies.
Independent Studies for Particular Students (AB 130)

Missed assignments and lack of satisfactory progress triggers evaluation as to whether it is in the best interest of the pupil to remain in Independent Study.

Independent Studies agreements will be reassessed every semester.
General Measures

- All adults and students are required to wear face coverings at school indoors and outdoors regardless of immunization status.

- Persons with a medical condition, mental health condition, or disability that prevents wearing a mask as well as persons who are hearing impaired may be exempt from mask requirements.

- Persons exempt from wearing a face covering due to a medical condition, must wear a face shields with an appropriate seal (cloth covering extended from the bottom edge of the shield and tucked into the shirt collar).
General Measures

Recent evidence indicates that in-person instruction can occur safely without minimum physical distancing requirements when other mitigation strategies (e.g., masking) are implemented. This is consistent with CDC K-12 School Guidance.

- Practice physical distancing when feasible.
- Physical barriers may be installed where physical distancing is not possible.
- Students must leave campus immediately upon dismissal.
- The school will hold large gatherings (e.g. Plaza, field trips) outdoors or cancel.
- Parents and visitors will have limited access to the school campus.
- When possible, keep student cohorts from mixing.
- Modified emergency drill protocols to maintain physical distancing.
Signage reminding students and staff about physical distancing will be posted in prominent locations throughout each school campus.

Follow disinfection guidelines developed by the California Department of Public Health and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention for classrooms, workspaces, outdoor spaces, playgrounds, etc.

Sites will have an isolation room where symptomatic individuals can remain until they can go home.
Healthy Hygiene Practices

- Students and staff will self-check for symptoms throughout the day. Those who develop signs and symptoms of COVID-19 will be sent home.

- Students will be frequently reminded to avoid touching their face and face covering, and to wash/sanitize their hands often.

- Face coverings and shields should be cleaned and sanitized daily at home.
Hand-washing stations with soap or 60% ethyl alcohol hand sanitizer will be made available in classrooms and other areas where staff/students are likely to be present.

Provide adequate student supplies to minimize the sharing of high-touch materials and clean between uses if sharing is unavoidable.
Teach and reinforce washing hands, avoiding contact with one’s eyes, nose, and mouth, and covering coughs and sneezes among students and staff.

Water fountains will be closed. Students must bring a filled water bottle to school each day, clearly labeled with their name.

All student belongings must be taken home each day (will be disposed of if left)
- Staff will limit communal activities and potlucks or other food sharing.

- Staff are prohibited from eating in break rooms or gathering in any other indoor space for meals.

- Staff professional development will follow physical distancing protocols when feasible or be delivered virtually.
Families and staff are required to take temperatures daily before going to school/work. Anyone with a fever of 100.0 or higher should not go to the school site.

Students and staff are required to also screen themselves for respiratory symptoms such as cough and shortness of breath prior to coming to school or work each day.* Students and staff experiencing those symptoms should not attend school/work.
Voices will keep track of truancy and chronic absenteeism rates. DoC and PLs will work with families of truant students to provide support and resources.

Voices will implement the Tiered Attendance and Re-Engagement Plan (21-22) for students that are truant, chronically absent or not engaged.
All staff and students are required to complete a daily Wellness Check using Parent Square prior to entering school grounds.
Parent Square Wellness Check

Step 1:
- Download ParentSquare
- Create Login

(you should receive an invitation email from PS)
Parent Square Wellness Check

Step 2: Allow for notifications and you can “Submit Health Screening” at the bottom.
Step 3:

- Complete the questionnaire
- Type your name and phone # at the bottom for confirmation
- Click “Submit” Form
Cleaning, Disinfection and Ventilation

- Staff will clean and disinfect frequently high-touched surfaces within the school at least daily and, as practicable, frequently throughout the day.

- A cleaning and disinfecting schedule is established.
- Increase ventilation by increasing outdoor air circulation (e.g., by opening windows) or using high-efficiency air filters and increasing ventilation rates.
- HVAC systems function properly, maximize air exchanges per hour, maximize outdoor air, and are maintained according to the manufacturer's recommendations.
Student Social Emotional Well Being

- Social-emotional learning
- Building relationships
- Community-building activities
- Trauma awareness and response
- Increased access to mental health/wellness services
- Deans of Culture (DoC), Parent Liaisons (PL), and/or counselor will provide referrals to resources.
- Addressing current events and societal issues
- DoC and PL will monitor and support student participation / attendance.
- DoC/PL will use a Tiered system for reaching out to the most at-risk students and families.
- Provide parent trainings and workshops.
- Assess students as needed for 504 accommodations.
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Will campuses be required to close again?
Voices has developed a plan for the possibility of repeated closures of groups/cohorts of students, classes, or entire facilities. Just because there is a positive case in a classroom, the entire classroom or school will not necessarily need to be closed.
What if someone has been diagnosed with COVID-19, or is waiting for test results, or has cough, fever, or shortness of breath, or other symptoms of COVID-19?

Stay home until it is safe to be around others. This means 24 hours with no fever (without fever-reducing medication) and symptoms improved, and 10 days since symptoms first appeared. If you live with others, stay in a specific “isolation room” or area and away from other people or pets. Use a separate bathroom, if available.

Staff or students should contact their personal medical provider if a return-to-school/work clearance note is needed since individual health situations may vary.

If a parent is diagnosed with COVID-19, will their student need to self-isolate 10 days before returning to school? How will the schools know when the student is okay to return?

If a student or staff has a household member that tests positive for COVID-19, the student will be ordered to quarantine at home for 10 days. The county health department may issue an order with explicit instructions on quarantine and details on its expiration. If needed, the county health department may provide clearance letters at the end of isolation/ quarantine.
Are gloves required?
Gloves are not recommended for use by students or staff, except for those conducting duties such as cleaning, first aid, medical procedures, or food services.

Will extensive classroom cleaning be performed if a student or teacher is diagnosed with COVID-19?
Yes. Voices will follow the established guidelines put forth by CDC and local health departments.
Glossary

**Contact** - an individual that has been within 6 ft. of an infected person for 15 minutes or longer, from two days prior to symptoms starting.

**Exposure** - a close encounter with a confirmed or probable COVID-19 case.

*defined by CDC*
Glossary

**Synchronous**- Live instruction (done in person or virtually)

**Asynchronous**- Recorded online instruction or independent online assignments

**Distance Learning** - also known as online learning, virtual learning, remote learning
Appendix
# Voices Health Screening for Students and Staff Checklist

1. Within the last 10 days have you been diagnosed with COVID-19 or had a test confirming you have the virus?

   Yes – STAY HOME and seek medical care.

2. Within the past 10 days, have you had close contact with someone who has been in isolation for COVID-19 or had a test confirming they have the virus? Close contact is less than 6 feet for 15 minutes or more.

   Yes – STAY HOME and seek medical care and testing.

3. a. Have you had any one or more of these symptoms today or within the past 3 days?

   - Fever or chills
   - Cough
   - Loss of taste or smell
   - Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing

   Yes – STAY HOME and seek medical care and testing.

3. b. Have you had any one or more of these symptoms today or within the past 3 days and that are new or not explained by another reason?

   - Fatigue
   - Muscle or body aches
   - Headache
   - Sore throat
   - Nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea

   Yes – STAY HOME and seek medical care and testing.
# Response to Confirmed or Suspected COVID-19 Cases and Close Contacts Protocol

## Steps to Take in Response to Confirmed or Suspected COVID-19 Cases and Close Contacts

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Send student/staff home.  
Recommend immediate testing.  
Notify school administration and COVID-19 Designee.  
Classroom remains open.  
If student/staff is not tested, must obtain medical note (explaining why not tested) OR follow instructions for positive case |  
If test is **negative**, stay at home until 24 hours after resolution of fever and other symptoms improve.  
If test is **positive**, isolate at home for at least 10 days after the first symptoms started and at least 24 hours after resolution of fever and other symptoms improve. Send out letters. |  
If **negative**, return to school 24 hours after resolution of fever and other improvement in other symptoms; provide evidence of negative test or medical note explaining why testing was not performed.  
If **positive**, can return once full isolation period is completed. |
| Scenario 2: Student or staff identified as a Close Contact* to a person who has tested positive for COVID-19  
**NEW** - Fully vaccinated individuals may not be required to quarantine, if they meet certain conditions. See secrecyhome.org for more info.  
A close contact is someone who was within 6 feet of the infected person for at least 15 minutes at any time beginning 2 days before the infected person had symptoms or tested positive* |  
Send home with instructions to quarantine for 10 days after last exposure.  
Recommend testing around day 6 after last exposure or, if symptomatic, test immediately. If test done earlier than day 6, repeat test towards end of quarantine.  
Notify school administration and COVID-19 Designee.  
Send out appropriate letters.  
Classroom remains open.  
All test results should be reported to the school. |  
If test is **negative**, quarantine for 10 days and monitor symptoms for 14 days after last exposure to COVID-19 case. If continuously exposed to a case during the case’s isolation (e.g., household member), quarantine ends 10 days after the case’s isolation period ends.  
If test is **positive**, isolate for at least 10 days after symptom onset AND at least 24 hours after resolution of fever AND other symptoms improve.  
(If never symptomatic, isolate for 10 days after date of positive test.) |  
Return to school/work once full 10-day quarantine is completed (or if contact became positive, full isolation period is completed).  
No medical note is needed.  
**NOTE:** Contacts must self-monitor for symptoms for a full 14 days from last exposure to case.  
If symptoms develop during the 14-day monitoring period, see Test Result Decision Tree for guidance. |
| Scenario 3: A student or staff member tests positive for COVID-19 in a cohort or non-cohort setting | **COHORT – Classroom closes**  
**Case:** Send home with instructions to isolate.  
**Contact:** Send home all members of the class cohort and any other campus close contacts. Then follow SCENARIO 2.  
Notify school administration and COVID-19 Designee  
Notify Public Health Department  
**NON-COHORT – Classroom remains open**  
**Case:** Send home with instructions to isolate.  
**Contact:** Use seating chart/roster & staff/student input to determine close contacts to send home. Then follow SCENARIO 2. |  
**Case:** For student/staff whose test is **positive**, isolate for at least 10 days after symptom onset AND at least 24 hours after resolution of fever AND other symptoms improve.  
(If never symptomatic, isolate for 10 days after date of positive test.)  
**Contact:** FOLLOW SCENARIO 2 |  
**Case:** Return to school/work once full isolation period is completed.  
No medical note needed.  
**Contact:** FOLLOW SCENARIO 2 |
| Scenario 4: Routine COVID-19 screening (no) |  
Continue at school/work until results are available. |  
If **negative**, no action needed.  
If **positive**, FOLLOW SCENARIO 3. |  
If **negative**, continue at school/work. No documentation needed. |

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*Close contact can be 15 minutes of continuous contact OR repeated short-duration interactions with the infected person.  
*Being considered a close contact does not depend on whether the contact or the infected person was wearing a face covering during their interaction.
Isolation and Quarantine Guidelines While Awaiting and Receiving COVID-19 Test Results

K-12 School COVID Student Close Contact Follow-up Steps (Version: August 4, 2021)

What is the Vaccination Status of the K-12 Student Who is a Close Contact to a Case in a School

K-12 Close Contact is Fully Vaccinated

- Is fully vaccinated close contact experiencing or reporting symptoms?
  - No - Not experiencing COVID symptoms
    - Student does not need to quarantine at home and may self-monitor for symptoms for 14 days after exposure. Testing is still recommended 3-5 days after close contact.
  - Yes - Close contact is experiencing COVID symptoms within 14 days of last date of exposure
    - If COVID symptoms appear within 14 days of exposure
      - Isolate at home right away
      - Inform health care provider
      - COVID testing recommended

K-12 Close Contact is NOT Fully Vaccinated

- Is unvaccinated close contact experiencing or reporting symptoms?
  - No - Not experiencing symptoms. If close contact is not symptomatic, when exposure occurred: Was the case wearing a mask? Was the close contact wearing a mask?
  - Yes - Close contact is experiencing COVID symptoms within 14 days of last date of exposure
    - Both case AND close contact were wearing a mask at a K-12 school setting
      - At least one person (case or close contact) was NOT wearing a mask while at K-12 school
    - If COVID symptoms appear within 14 days of exposure
      - Student who is a close contact must quarantine at home (i.e. cannot attend school for in-person instruction) as long as student:
        - Remains symptom-free AND
        - Continues to mask appropriately AND
        - Gets tested 2 times/week during 10-day quarantine (recommend testing immediately after exposure notification and then 3 days apart) AND
        - Continues to quarantine for 10 days from extracurricular activities at school, including sports and activities within community setting. However, may resume the extracurricular and community activities after Day 7 if a test collected after Day 5 is negative.

Footnotes

1. Within 0-6 feet of a case for more than 15 minutes in a 24-hour period.
2. At least 2 weeks have passed since completion of a 1-dose or 2-dose COVID vaccine series.
4. Modified quarantine may be used when the exposure occurred in a school setting supervised by school staff, e.g. school bus, indoors, or outdoors. The case could be a teacher, other school staff, or another student. The close contact may participate in all instructional components of school, including eating meals on campus following guidance. May not perform other activities where a mask cannot be worn, such as playing certain musical instruments.
5. If asymptomatic, any FDA-approved test (PCR or antigen) may be used but PCR is preferred. Testing of asymptomatic close contacts may occur at school, healthcare facility, or other locations supervised by school or health care personnel. At-home testing is not recommended to determine close contact's quarantine status.
6. If a close contact is symptomatic, a negative test result from an antigen or molecular point-of-care or at-home test should be confirmed with a laboratory-based PCR test.
Staff Specific Considerations

- Staff received information about the use of available leaves related to COVID-19.
- Non-vaccinated employees are required to get a free COVID-19 test each week.
- Staff will be encouraged to limit use of high-touch, non-essential appliances and materials (bring your own coffee, water, lunch in a cooler bag vs. using the fridge, limit use of microwave, etc.)
- Staff will be encouraged to have lunch outdoors maintaining social distancing or in their classroom.
- Staff will be asked to wipe down shared equipment (copy machine, microwave, etc.) with disinfecting wipes before/after each use.
References

California Department of Public Health August 2, 2021 Letter

California Department of Public Health K-12 Schools Guidance 2021-2022 Questions and Answers

CDC Guidance for COVI-19 Prevention in K-12 Schools

COVID School Grid

UCSF - HEARTS Trauma Informed Principles for Promoting School and Community Success

COVID-19 Industry Guidance